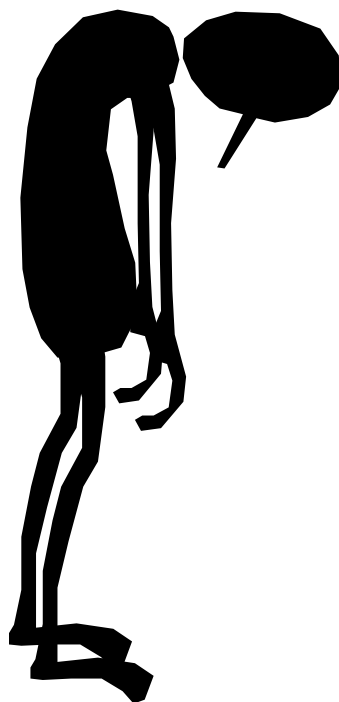


How Getting High Can Get You AIDS



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Getting High Makes You Forget

Being a teen is exciting. Being a teen in a world with drugs, sex, and AIDS is hard. You might not know all the ways drugs and AIDS are connected. This brochure will help you understand the dangers and how to avoid them. Drugs like alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine can cloud your judgment, make it hard to know right from wrong, distract you from reality.

Drugs Make You Forget What's Important

...so you care less about yourself or your friends because you just don't care.

You Forget You're Only Human

When you get high you may mistakenly believe nothing bad could happen to you.

Drugs Can Make You Do Things You May Wish You Had Never Done, Like:

- acting recklessly and foolishly
- getting romantic with someone you don't really like
- having sex without planning
- having sex without thinking of the consequences
- forgetting to use a condom or forgetting to have your partner use a condom.

When Drugs Make You Forget, You May Take Risks, Like Having Sex

Teen years are a time of making all kinds of new decisions. One of those decisions is whether to have sex. It's important to make that decision with a clear head because sex today is far riskier than ever before. Drugs like alcohol, marijuana, and cocaine can get in the way of making clear decisions.

Why Is Sex Risky? It Can Lead to AIDS!

- Unprotected sex with an infected partner is the most common way HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, is spread. Another way is sharing needles to inject drugs.
- Your sex partner may have had sex with someone who shared a needle to inject drugs with an HIV infected person.
- The more sex partners you have, the more chance you have of getting AIDS.
- Two sure ways to avoid the AIDS virus are not having sex and not sharing needles.
- If you choose to have sex, always use a condom to help reduce the risk of getting AIDS.

Make Your Decision About Sex With a Clear Head, Without Drugs

Sometimes you can feel pressured to have sex when you may not want to, and drugs make it harder to say no. Pressure about sex can be difficult to deal with -- it can come from your boyfriend or girlfriend, from the crowd you hang out with, or even from your own feelings. The first thing to remember is you're in charge of your body and what you choose to do

with it. The second thing to remember is there is a lot at stake -- your decision about sex can have consequences that last a lifetime.

It helps to Make a Plan and Stick to It

Then, if someone offers you drugs or suggests sex, you'll know what to do. Plan not to use drugs so you can keep a clear head. Plan how to say no, to be careful, and to think about what to do. The time to make your plan is when you have a clear head.

Making Your Plan

Think about who you are and what's important to you. Think about how using drugs and having sex could affect that. When you have a plan, it's easier to handle situations where you want to have fun with friends but don't want to use drugs or have sex.

If someone pressures you about drugs you can say nicely but firmly, "I'm not interested," or, "I don't use drugs."

If someone pressures you about sex you could let them know where you stand by saying: "I'm not ready for it yet," or, "Maybe it feels right for you, but it's not for me."

It's a Fact.

- Teens who use condoms during sex tend to use them less if they've been drinking or smoking dope.
- More than 20 percent of the people who have AIDS are in their 20's. Since it can take up to 10 years or more for symptoms to start, many got infected in their teens.
- The number of reported AIDS cases among teenagers continues to increase.

You May Already Know This But...

- YOU CAN'T GET AIDS from hugging, holding hands, mosquitoes or other insects.
- YOU CAN GET AIDS from unprotected sexual contact.
- HIV is the human immunodeficiency virus that causes AIDS.
- You cannot tell if someone has the HIV virus by looking at them. A blood test is the only way to be sure.
- AIDS is fatal.

Drugs make you forget things and if you forget how risky sex can be, you can catch the AIDS virus and not know it for months, even years.

For more information call 1-800-662-HELP.

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